



WIRRAL 2025

MORE EQUAL, MORE PROSPEROUS

A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

Wirral 2025 should be viewed alongside Wirral's Local Area Agreement. This details the current improvement priorities for Wirral's Strategic Partnership and related targets and is therefore considered the medium-term delivery plan for the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Foreword from Councillor Steve Foulkes

Chair of Wirral's Strategic Partnership

Wirral is a borough with enormous potential and opportunities. It is poised for a momentous period of change that will see a raft of spectacular projects, heralding large-scale investment and boundless opportunities, making it a major contributor to the city region's growth agenda. For example, the UK's biggest regeneration project – Wirral Waters - is set to transform Birkenhead and Wallasey. This visionary £4.5 billion, 30 year redevelopment of Birkenhead and Wallasey docks will have a major impact on Wirral and the Northwest region.

Wirral residents experience some of the country's most notable variations in economic and social well being – a substantial percentage of Wirral's population lives within some of the country's most deprived areas, whilst there are also a large number that live in some of the country's most affluent areas. For many of our citizens there is an excellent quality of life, with good leisure facilities, an attractive coastline and countryside, good quality housing, good schools and quality employment opportunities. For some, the picture is very different, with pockets of high unemployment, low skills levels, poorer quality housing, unacceptable levels of anti-social behaviour and high levels of ill health.

The Wirral 2025 vision is therefore of ***a more prosperous and equal Wirral, enabling all communities and people to thrive and achieve their full potential.***

Partners in Wirral know that we need to overcome significant labour market challenges and agree that preventing and tackling worklessness and related deprivation (including child poverty) are priorities that must cut across strategic policies at a number of levels.

An ambitious Investment Strategy is in place that will drive the economic development of the Borough. This is led by a partnership board consisting of representatives of both the public and private sectors.

Wirral 2025 harnesses the goals of our Investment Strategy and demonstrates how statutory agencies, the private sector and the community and voluntary sector will work collectively to ensure that all communities and people can share in future prosperity. It sets the scene for partnership working in the borough for the years to come and will play a key role in meeting the borough's future challenges, by linking together key local authority and partner strategies such as the Wirral's Local Development Framework, the land use plan for the area.

Partners have already developed strong and effective partnerships with Wirral's voluntary and community sector, which has been at the forefront of much of our activity to tackle worklessness, deprivation and low skills within some of our most deprived neighbourhoods and disadvantaged groups.

We are beginning to tackle the key challenges facing Wirral through the delivery of our Local Area Agreement. This is a 3 year action plan which has been negotiated with central government to deliver improvements on Wirral's shared priorities. Wirral 2025 is ambitious in scope. However, Wirral's Local Area Agreement will balance this ambition with targeted activity. The improvement targets in our Local Area Agreement will address the key challenges identified in the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Wirral 2025 will be reviewed annually using a ‘health-check’ approach to ensure that trends in achieving aims and objectives are moving in the right direction, and we will undertake a more detailed ‘health-check’ in 2011 to coincide with the final year of our current Local Area Agreement. ‘Health-checks’ will take into account updated evidence from key sources such as Wirral’s Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and will take a ‘you said’, ‘we did’ approach to reflect community and customer feedback. A major review and refresh of Wirral 2025 will take place every five years.

As we enter a period of worldwide economic instability and our residents and businesses in Wirral face change and uncertainty, it is even more important to ensure we continue to work towards delivering our vision. We remain committed to addressing inequalities across Wirral. Our new investment framework known as Working Wirral has been hailed by the Northwest Development Agency as an example of an approach to tackling worklessness that others should follow.

There is no doubt that we face challenging times but I am convinced that together we can face the challenges in front of us and grasp the opportunities we have to make Wirral a better place.

On behalf of Wirral’s Strategic Partnership, I am proud to commend to you our Sustainable Community Strategy for the borough – Wirral 2025.

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1. WIRRAL'S STORY OF PLACE

1.1 An Area of Contrasts

Wirral is a borough of enormous opportunity but it also a place of sharp contrasts, with the overall picture masking stark inequalities for local people. Many of our citizens enjoy an excellent quality of life, with good housing, schools and a high quality living environment. In certain parts of the borough, however, there are significant levels of deprivation. Within Wirral, localities range from the 26th most deprived in the country (around St James Church in Birkenhead) to one of the most affluent, or least deprived - in South West Heswall less than 6 miles away¹.

Some of the 3% most deprived areas in the country fall within the urban areas of Birkenhead and parts of Wallasey. These areas generally have a younger population profile than the Wirral average. They experience higher than average levels of anti-social behaviour and educational achievement at Key Stage 4 is below the Wirral average. Life expectancy is shorter than the Wirral average and a high percentage of those who claim Job Seekers Allowance in Wirral live in these areas. House prices are lower than the Wirral average although this does mean that there is greater availability of affordable housing. There are generally low levels of car ownership in these areas but there is good access to services by public transport. Although the quality of the built and surrounding environment can be poor in our deprived areas, every part of the borough is well served by public parks and open spaces.

In contrast there are areas of the borough (including Bebington and Clatterbridge, Heswall, Pensby and Thingwall and West Wirral) that have an older population profile where house prices are higher than the Wirral average and there is limited availability of affordable housing. There are low levels of deprivation, low levels of anti-social behaviour and educational achievement at Key Stage 4 is above average. Life expectancy in these areas is above the Wirral average, and there are high levels of car ownership. Most areas have relatively good access to services by public transport. These areas are well served for parks and open spaces with easy access to countryside and coastal areas.

The remainder of Wirral has a more mixed profile, with generally low levels of deprivation although some areas to the east of the Greasby, Frankby, Irby, Upton and Woodchurch Area Forum boundary², and in Leasowe, Moreton and Saughall Massie also fall into the most deprived 3% in the country.

In terms of deprivation, Wirral compares favourably with most of the other Merseyside local authorities, particularly Liverpool and Knowsley. However, in terms of employment deprivation, Wirral comes out as 8th worst in the country,

¹ Our understanding about deprivation in Wirral is supported by statistics taken from the national Index of Multiple Deprivation which combines a number of indicators, chosen to cover a range of economic, social and housing issues, into a single deprivation score for each small area in England. The Indices are used widely to analyse patterns of deprivation, identify areas that would benefit from special initiatives or programmes and as a tool to determine eligibility for funding.

² Wirral has 11 Area Forums, which cover the whole borough: Bebington / Clatterbridge; Bidston / Claughton; Birkenhead / Tranmere / Rock Ferry; Bromborough / Eastham; East Wallasey (Liscard / Seacombe); Greasby, Frankby, Irby, Upton, Woodchurch; Heswall / Pensby / Thingwall; Leasowe / Moreton / Saughall Massie; New Brighton / Wallasey; Oxton / Prenton; West Wirral.

behind Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield, Bradford, and Sunderland.

Wirral's population has declined from over 355,000 during the 1970s to 310,200 in mid-2007³. The population is skewed towards older age groups, with a lower proportion of younger adults and a higher proportion of older people than the averages for the rest of England and the North West. The fastest falling population categories are the 24 years and under age groups. The principal flows of population (i.e. people moving out of the borough to other areas) are out of Wirral to Denbighshire, Flintshire and Chester and into Wirral from Liverpool and the rest of greater Merseyside.

When asked, Wirral residents have consistently identified crime levels, clean streets and activities for teenagers as being important to residents and in need of improvement (through nationally mandated surveys undertaken in 2003 and 2006). In 2006, responses to Wirral's General Resident's Survey indicated that these topics were however less in need of improvement than in 2003, suggesting that residents were noticing the positive impact of community safety, youth activities and street cleansing initiatives in the borough. However, results from the Wirral Resident's Survey 2007 show that several topics have become important to a greater proportion of residents and also been stated as in greater need of improvement by a greater proportion of residents. The most significant change has been in the importance and need of improvement of the provision of affordable decent housing. This is in line with the national context.

1.2 Wirral's Economy

Challenges

It is clear that our economy in Wirral is under-performing. Although Wirral plays an important role in the City Region⁴ labour market – exporting substantial numbers of highly skilled workers to Liverpool, Chester and elsewhere – Wirral has a relatively small and low value economy. Earnings of workers in Wirral are below the national average. However, mainly as a result of the fact that many of our skilled residents work elsewhere, the earnings of residents are actually above national figures. Wirral has one of the lowest GVA per capita⁵ in Merseyside and the North West (56.7% of the UK average). In addition, our economy is growing relatively slowly and as a result is falling behind other parts of the City Region, the North West and the rest of the UK. Wirral is ranked as the eighth most deprived area of the country in relation to employment.

There are huge variations in levels of economic inactivity across Wirral – from over 56% in parts of Birkenhead and Tranmere, to less than 3% in parts of Heswall. Significant concentrations of economic inactivity go hand in hand with worklessness, child poverty and inequalities in relation to health, educational achievement and crime. There are also stark gaps in employment skills in our deprived communities.

³ Office of National Statistics

⁴ The City Region has the Core City of Liverpool at its centre surrounded by the local authority districts of St Helens, Wirral, Knowsley, Sefton, and Halton

⁵ GVA (Gross Value Added) is a measure of economic value and is used in the estimation of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). It measures the difference between the value of goods and services produced and the cost of raw materials and other inputs which are used in production

Wirral faces a number of economic challenges that must be addressed if it is to become a thriving place to live in, work in and visit:

- For every 100 people of working age in the borough, there are only 61 jobs;
- The gap between Wirral, the North West and national rates is significant in terms of all the main indicators of an enterprising economy, such as self-employment rates, business start up rates and business density, as well as GVA per head;
- As indicated earlier, more than 40,000 residents currently travel outside Wirral to access higher paid employment in Liverpool and Chester;
- There are low levels of enterprise and entrepreneurial activity in our borough, particularly amongst women and people from black and ethnic minority groups;
- Wirral has a higher than average proportion of the working age population on benefits and a quarter of all school children in Wirral qualify for free school meals. The people with the lowest qualifications are least likely to find employment; Wirral has a rate of just over 35% of working age population with no qualifications. There are close to 20,000 people claiming incapacity benefit, a significant number which has a clear impact on the economic performance of the borough;
- There is a shortfall in the quantity and quality of sites / premises for modern business needs;
- The VAT registration rate of businesses is amongst the lowest in the North West.

Over and above the challenges set out above, the UK economy is now officially in the midst of a recession, ending the extraordinary boom of the last decade. Conditions have deteriorated rapidly amidst global financial turbulences. The task for partners is to understand how Wirral's economy is being affected and respond in appropriate ways.

Moving in the right direction

The majority of respondents to a Wirral Citizen's Panel Survey in Spring 2007 thought that the local authority had been successful in supporting the economic regeneration of Wirral.

A comprehensive Investment Strategy is now in place to guide Wirral's economic development and full employment and enterprise strategies have been developed to create a workforce which meets the demands of employers. Partnership arrangements around this agenda have been strengthened further through merging a number of partnerships and groups to establish Wirral's Economic Development and Skills (WEDS) Partnership. This single partnership will deliver the economic development and enterprise outcomes within Wirral's Local Area Agreement.

Working Wirral brings together a number of resources (Working Neighbourhoods Fund, Deprived Areas Fund and the European Social Fund's Complementary

Strand) to commission activity to deliver the Investment Strategy priorities of tackling worklessness, improving skills levels and increasing enterprise, business growth and investment. This commissioning process is being overseen by Wirral's Economic Development and Skills (WEDS) Partnership in respect of employment and skills, with Wirral's Investment Strategy Board advising on the priorities for investment and business growth.

Wirral partners are developing a coherent and co-ordinated response to the recession. A critical issue is to understand how the impact is being experienced locally and devising measures to mitigate the impact. Regular liaison with individual businesses and business representative organisations is driving our responses. A range of new measures have already been introduced, ensuring that the Council pays all small and medium sized suppliers within 10 days, the introduction of a new range of business support mechanisms to provide additional grant support, and business and consultancy support.

Partners staged a 2 day conference at the Floral Pavilion in March 2009 aimed at providing direct support to assist companies experiencing difficulties in the current economic climate.

Partners have already done much to work with local people on jobs and skills. The Pathways to Work partnership scheme led by Job Centre Plus is helping people on benefits back into work. An innovative Reach Out service is in place giving confidential advice and support to people who have experienced problems in accessing employment, education and training. Nearly 200 people who had previously been unemployed for between one and 15 years are now in employment through Reach Out resulting in many families being moved out of the child poverty index.

There is a continuing development programme to meet intense demand for prime office and industrial locations. £150m has been invested in Wirral International Business Park and more than 200,000 sq ft of quality business units were developed in 2006 alone.

Tourism has already been boosted by Wirral's major events and impressive cultural offer (which now includes the new Floral Pavilion and Spaceport at Seacombe Ferry) and work is underway to develop a 5 year plan for the borough's cultural and leisure services. The Wirral Coastal Partnership brings together key stakeholders with an interest in Wirral's natural coastline asset, with the aim of maximising the visitor potential to the area. We will continue to capitalise upon Wirral's exceptional tourism assets and build upon the legacy of the successful Open Golf Championship and Capital of Culture year.

A Merseyside Rural Economy Steering Group has recently been established, bringing together the six Greater Merseyside Local Authorities, with St Helens as the lead. The aim of the group is to establish a clear evidence base of rural economic opportunities and challenges; to agree a common understanding of rural economic programmes and funding opportunities; and to understand the specific issues of each individual local authority.

Partners working together to improve our economy include:

- Birkenhead 6th Form College
- Business Link
- Chamber of Commerce
- Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Trust
- Community and voluntary sector
- Connexions
- Federation of Small Businesses
- Government Office North West
- Job Centre Plus
- Learning and Skills Council
- Merseyside Employer Coalition
- NHS Wirral
- North West Development Agency
- North West Trades Union Congress
- Private sector
- Probation Service
- Wirral Council
- Wirral Metropolitan College
- Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

1.3 Crime and Community Safety in Wirral

Challenges

Wirral has the lowest rate of recorded crime in Merseyside. Rates of burglaries, violent crimes, robberies and vehicle crimes continue to fall and are amongst the lowest in the country. Against a backdrop of improvements in levels of crime, certain communities of the borough continue to suffer higher levels of crime than others. Wirral's most deprived areas (roughly 10% of the borough) account for 30% of all recorded British Comparator Survey (BCS) crime on Wirral. These communities also suffer disproportionately from higher levels of violent crime. Much of this is violent crime in our town centres and is associated with alcohol and the night-time economy.

There has been a fall in residents' fear of crime. However, anti-social behaviour remains a significant issue for local people and, whilst performance is improving, anti-social behaviour still makes up a large percentage of the total number of reported incidents that the Police and other agencies deal with in Wirral.

Serious injury and death of road users and pedestrians in Wirral continues to be a significant challenge. Despite various successful initiatives such as cycle training, traffic calming and road safety neighbourhood regeneration initiatives, the borough still has particularly high rates of road casualties involving car users, child pedestrians and motorcyclists compared to other Merseyside authorities.

Moving in the right direction

As indicated earlier, Wirral is largely a very safe place to live, visit and work in. Wirral's Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) is proud of the impact joint working has had in making the borough safer. The Partnership is made up of the key agencies working to tackle crime and disorder as well as councillors and

community representatives. It is accountable for Wirral's Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy, which is reviewed every three years on the basis of an audit of crime and disorder in the borough and consultation with Wirral residents.

It is widely recognised by partners in Wirral that we need to continue to work together to reduce access to alcohol and improve education, treatment and enforcement to reduce overall crime. Wirral's Crime and Disorder Reduction and Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategies detail the preventative action undertaken to tackle the alcohol abuse that is key to reducing alcohol related crime.

The work of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership is delivered by a multi-disciplinary team which includes officers seconded from Merseyside Police, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service and Wirral's Family Support Unit. It is supported by a dedicated Community Safety Solicitor.

Neighbourhood policing is now well established in Wirral with eight Neighbourhood Teams, each led by an Inspector. Neighbourhood Teams include both Police Officers and Policy and Community Support Officers, who focus on providing reassurance and addressing issues affecting local communities.

Wirral's Youth Offending Service has achieved a consistently high level of performance.

In March 2007 Wirral was selected by the government as one of 40 *Respect* areas as part of the drive against anti-social behaviour. Many local initiatives have been put in place, including the Youth *Respect* Team. A Parenting Coordinator is now in post within the Anti-Social Behaviour Team. This specialist practitioner delivers parenting programmes for families engaged in significant anti-social behaviour. Wirral's *Respect* Bus visits public places so that local residents can get advice from a number of specialists on topics ranging from abandoned cars to youth nuisance.

Even though the issue of crime amongst Wirral's teenagers is still identified by residents as an area for improvement, the perception of 'youth disorder as a big problem' has reduced by 16.5% since 2005⁶. Working with young people is a recognised strength in Wirral, with a Beacon status award for Positive Youth Engagement⁷.

There are many projects and activities which have contributed to better engagement with young people and the broader agenda to make Wirral a safer place. Just some of these are:

- Merseyside's Fire and Rescue Service's work with young people in a number of ways to prevent hoax calls and anti-social behaviour, including early intervention projects and work with children and young people at risk;
- The *On Track* partnership approach to preventative work with disadvantaged youngsters at risk of becoming involved in crime;

⁶ Based on 2007 perception data

⁷ Beacon status is granted to selected authorities in recognition of excellence in a service area. The awards are designed to help local authorities to learn from each other and share best practice.

- A community involvement and heritage project focused around Birkenhead Park – *It's My Park* - delivered in partnership with Liverpool University, providing diversionary activities for children, tours for local schools and events for the local community;
- An intelligence-led approach from the local authority to ensure that that sports and recreation activities are directed where and when needed to prevent anti-social behaviour through the use of sports activities;
- A road safety campaign aimed at young men - *For My Girlfriend* - with a hard hitting reconstruction of a car crash, run by Wirral Council in partnership with the emergency services.
- A number of Respect Watch schemes run by Wirral Partnership Homes which seek to tackle the perception and fear of crime by managing anti-social behaviour 'hot spots';
- The Merseyrail *TravelSafe* initiative which has resulted in the whole of the Merseyrail network accredited under the National Secure Stations scheme. British Transport Police are also working in conjunction with Merseytravel on *Operation Shield* to identify and remove weapons from people using public transport;
- *Operation Hawk*, the successful Merseyside Police response to street level drug-dealing. This is a co-ordinated campaign which includes police operations, media and marketing activity, information gathering from the public and drug awareness promotion in schools.

Crime and community safety partners include:

- Community and voluntary sector
- Crown Prosecution Service
- Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service
- Merseyside Police
- Merseyside Probation Service
- Merseytravel
- NHS Wirral
- Wirral's Anti Social Behaviour Team
- Wirral's Community Safety Team
- Wirral Council
- Wirral's Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT)
- Wirral's Strategic Housing Partnership
- Wirral's Youth Offending Service

1.4 Health and wellbeing in Wirral

Challenges

Many Wirral residents enjoy excellent health and wellbeing. Although life expectancy is rising, there is a stark mortality gap between the most affluent and

the most deprived areas, with those in the most affluent areas living on average over 10 years longer than those in the most deprived areas. Wirral has the widest variation in mortality rates within the borough of all the Merseyside districts and one of the largest health inequalities in the Northwest.

For women, the main conditions contributing to the gap in life expectancy between Wirral and England are cancer and cardiovascular disease. For men, the main conditions are cardiovascular disease and digestive disorders (including cirrhosis).

Other key challenges in relation to tackling health inequalities are addressing alcohol harm and its related conditions and improving mental health. Figures suggest that around 65% of Wirral's 20,000 incapacity benefit claimants are claiming for a mental health condition. Partners also recognise that we need to continue to make progress in relation to lifestyle issues and obesity and respiratory illnesses such as Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease. Many of these issues can be linked to other deprivation indicators such as those around worklessness, as well as levels of educational attainment and aspiration.

Drug and alcohol misuse are linked to a wide range of issues over and above their impact on people's health. As highlighted earlier in the strategy, for example, in Wirral we have a clear understanding of how alcohol misuse is linked to levels of violent crime associated with the borough's night-time economy. Alcohol misuse and its impact on violent crime and hospital admissions are continuing challenges for the borough.

Wirral has an ageing population. 21% of Wirral residents are of retirement age and the population of older people aged over 65 is expected to increase. The population of people aged over 85 is set to increase by 15% by 2010. With the older age groups expected to be the fastest increasing population group by 2029, looking after the frail older persons population will become a major issue for the borough in the near future, impacting on health, social care and other services. Partners in Wirral also understand that people want to remain independent for as long as possible and to have choice in how they access services and this is a key consideration for partners in Wirral as they design services for the future.

Our ageing population will mean an increase in the number of people with long term conditions and a high risk of falls is likely to present significant challenges in relation to increased demand for hospital care and support to live at home. Falls are a major cause of disability and the leading cause of mortality due to injury in older people over 75.

It has been estimated that there will be a rise of 12% in the total number of people needing a learning disability service in Wirral by 2011 with the most significant increase of 20% in the 60-79 age group.

Moving in the right direction

The reduction of health inequalities is complex and requires consistent action across a wide range of agencies at national and local level. Some progress has been made in terms of reducing the overall mortality rates for Wirral through the success of some specific intervention measures and, following positive feedback from a recent I&DeA Healthy Communities Peer Review, a health inequalities action

plan is being developed which will address Wirral Council's contribution to improving the underlying causes of poor health such as worklessness, educational attainment and aspiration.

NHS Wirral (formerly known as Wirral Primary Care Trust) and the Council have worked together to develop five lifestyle strategies to encourage people to make healthier choices. These strategies cover obesity, food and drink, physical activity, drinking safely and being smoke free and have all been integrated into an overarching health and wellbeing strategic framework under the direction of the borough's Joint Directors of Public Health.

Our innovative Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy aims to address the negative effects of alcohol use by tackling young people's alcohol misuse, developing alcohol related identification and treatment services and providing effective alcohol related crime and disorder reduction initiatives. Alcohol outreach services are also held within Wirral Council's one stop shops where reception workers have been trained to signpost people.

Wirral Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) brings together a wide range of statutory and voluntary organisations concerned with the effects of drug and alcohol use in Wirral and continues to be recognised for its excellent performance. Wirral's Drug and Alcohol Action Team is responsible for ensuring that the targets identified in the National Drug Strategy are achieved locally and priorities for action in Wirral echo the four key aims of the National Drug Strategy. These are to prevent today's young people from becoming tomorrow's problematic substance users, reduce the availability of illegal drugs, reduce drug related crime and its effect on communities and provide fast and effective treatment.

A strategic framework for adult social care has also been developed, with refreshed joint commissioning strategies for older people and learning disability now in place. Engagement with stakeholders is also improving. For example, an Older People's Parliament has been set up in partnership with Wirral Senior Citizen's Forum, to give older people an opportunity to have their say on decisions that affect them.

The local authority is leading a drive to put power in the hands of the most vulnerable people through the use of individual budgets and direct payments. These two methods provide people with more choice about the services we deliver and how they access them. The development of individual budgets and self directed care will also provide individuals with greater choice and control over their employment, learning and social opportunities.

Much has already been done to help disabled and older people to live at home more safely and Wirral Council is working with Wirral Partnership Homes and NHS Wirral to develop this further, with the aims of reducing the numbers of people experiencing falls and assisting with hospital discharges. Following a successful pilot of the Smart House in Woodchurch, a technology-based service is being rolled out. To date over 200 people have had assistive technology equipment installed in their homes. Additionally, a Falls Prevention Service, funded through the Supporting People Programme, and supported by the Falls Prevention Modernisation Board, offers Home Safety Assessments and the provision of a minor repair service to mitigate risk.

Wirral's parks and open spaces are vitally important to delivering the quality of life outcomes we want for all our citizens, and much has already been done to link health and wellbeing strategies to this important asset.

New resources have been allocated to a cleaning scheme capable of responding flexibly outside normal hours, including weekends, to calls to remove glass and debris from children's play areas where particular problems of cleanliness and safety are identified during periods of high use. This scheme will be monitored and the results used to inform future service delivery.

Wirral's leisure centres, in partnership with the Amateur Swimming Association, have adopted the national plan for teaching swimming and have pioneered a new scheme which has seen older people accessing the borough's swimming pools for free. A free swimming programme for young people has already increased the use of pools by 65%.

Other initiatives include developing the *Books on Prescription* service that encourages more and better informed users to take greater responsibility for their own health. This is a joint project between NHS Wirral and Wirral Libraries. Council funding has also been identified for the *Get into Reading* project, matching that of NHS Wirral and the University of Liverpool, who run the scheme in association with Wirral Libraries. The scheme, which aims to improve the mental well being of people and build community spirit through shared reading, and which operates in libraries, community centres and day centres across Wirral, has already proved successful and attracted national attention for the benefits it brings to those who take part.

Health and well being partners include:

- Age Concern
- Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Trust
- Community and voluntary sector
- Government Office North West
- Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service
- Merseytravel
- NHS Wirral
- Wirral's Drug and Alcohol Team (DAAT)
- Department for Work and Pensions
- Wirral Council
- Wirral Information Resource for Equality and Disability (WIRED)
- Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

1.5 Life chances for Wirral's children and young people

Challenges

Most of Wirral's children and young people will fulfil the aspirations that we and their parents and carers have for them. They will be healthy, safe and well educated; have easy access to recreation, sport and leisure; be able to make a positive contribution to our society; and be well prepared for their working lives. Children

and young people do well in our schools. They are entitled to a place in a nursery or early years setting from the age of 3 and nearly all young children take advantage of this.

Attainment levels in primary schools are above the national average in writing and science for seven year olds and statistics for 11 year olds are above or inline with national averages in all subject areas. Roughly 70% of all pupils in Wirral attain five or more A*-C GCSE grades.

However, some children and young people in our borough do not fulfil their potential, with a clear link between deprivation and academic attainment. Despite overall attainment levels being above the national average, there are stark disparities in attainment between areas of the borough, with children in Birkenhead achieving a low level of A*-C grades at GCSE compared to those in West Wirral. Better outcomes for children and young people are invariably found in the more affluent areas. The GCSE attainment gap (for 5 or more GCSEs at grade A*-C) between free school meal pupils and non free school meals pupils in our maintained schools was just over 37% in 2008, higher than in the other Merseyside districts. The key challenge for us therefore is to bridge the Key Stage 3 (11-14 year olds) attainment gap in science, mathematics and English in schools in Wirral's deprived communities to ensure that the pupils involved have improved chances at GCSE level.

Children and young people in the more deprived areas of Wirral are also less healthy, less safe, and are more likely not to be able to find a job. They also have a much higher chance of becoming teenage parents and long-term outcomes for both the parent and child are poorer than average amongst teenage parents. Although the outcomes for Wirral children and young people taken as a whole exceed the expectations that we may have, given the levels of deprivation, the challenge for us is to eliminate those disparities in outcomes and ensure that all our young people have the best possible start in life.

Broadly, we think that of the 78,000 children in Wirral, 20% at any one time will have additional needs which require some kind of extra support. Most of these children will be living in the more disadvantaged areas. Within this 20%, about 2,000 children will have more complex needs and will require a much higher level of support; for example, if they have to be taken into care or are severely disabled.

Nearly 90% of 16 year olds stay on in school or college or go into employment. However the numbers of young people not engaged in education, employment and training (NEET) is an important challenge. Whilst significant progress has been made in reducing the number of young people 16-18 not in education, employment or training, the most deprived areas of the borough have been identified as having disproportionately higher levels of young people not in education employment or training, as well as specific cohorts including teenage mothers, care leavers and young offenders.

There are too many looked after children in the borough and they do not achieve as well as others, with only 15% achieving 5+ A*-C grades at GCSE in 2006. Reducing the number of looked after children must be achieved whilst ensuring that the safety of the children remains a paramount concern.

The teenage conception rate in Wirral remains lower than the North West regional average but higher than the national and Merseyside rates. Rates of teenage parenthood in Wirral continue to be highest in those areas that experience higher levels of deprivation and poorer educational attainment.

In 2007, the proportion of children who were classified as either overweight or obese was 25% of Reception Year children and 35% of Year Six children. As strategies to promote healthy lifestyles are effective and the proportion of children who are overweight or obese increase with age, we need to ensure we help families maintain a healthy weight from infancy to adulthood.

Moving in the right direction

Our children and young people's strategic plan, developed by Wirral's Children and Young People's Partnership, identifies need and appropriate action across the borough.

Wirral has responded well to the challenge of developing childcare to support parents into work or training, with the long term aim of helping to lift children out of poverty. We have seen growth in most sectors although the numbers of childminders operating in the borough are subject to some variation.

Wirral's children and young people have access to a range of extended services and activities which support and motivate them to achieve their full potential. Our children's centres are at the heart of this agenda. In primary school this means access to a varied menu of activities combined with childcare, if needed, and in secondary school these activities are offered alongside a safe place to be. The menu includes sport, arts and drama, recreational play, homework clubs and some academically focused activities for those who need extra tuition or more challenging opportunities for those most able. Activities can be on the school site or somewhere else in the locality and are available outside of school hours and during school holidays.

Schools are supported to identify children with additional needs, ensuring swift and easy access to a whole range of specialist services. Family learning sessions enable children to learn with their fathers and mothers. Information provided to parents through this service helps ensure a smooth transition into primary school and enables them to support their child moving on to secondary school.

School standards are high – most of our schools on inspection are classified as good or outstanding and children do consistently well at all Key Stages. Nearly 90% of our 16 year olds stay on in school or college or go into employment; over 45% of 18 year olds go to university. The Connexions Service gives good support in providing information, advice and guidance for all young people 13-19 (up to 25 for those with particular needs), and targeted services exist for young people who are vulnerable or not clear about their future.

Most children and young people are healthy. Children and young people are well supported by a community paediatric team, health visitors, school nurses and others.

Children and young people are generally safe and learn how to care for themselves. They make a positive contribution to life in Wirral. They take part in musical activities, games, sports and outdoor pursuits and are encouraged to take part in positive activities through youth and play provision. Many children and young people belong to clubs and societies where they can develop their interests and skills. Different activities enable children and young people to have fun and also learn about themselves and how they can make a difference to society. They achieve awards under the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme and they volunteer in their local communities. Supported by their teachers, youth workers, Connexions Personal Advisors, the organisers of voluntary groups and many others, they grow up to be well-adjusted, active and responsible young people.

Just some of the projects and activities making a difference to children and young people's lives in Wirral are:

- Wirral's two dedicated *Smokefree* Officers, joined by smoking cessation youth workers, actively promoting an age of sale change across the borough using the health promotion trailer;
- An award winning scheme - *Kerbcraft: Crafty the Fox* - promoting road safety to schoolchildren;
- *Dig It* - a scheme initiated by Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service in response to community concerns about anti-social behaviour and complaints from youngsters about lack of things to do. The project has been developed in partnership with many agencies enabling young people to build a market garden and community kitchen which is used for healthy eating, food hygiene and cookery classes, using the produce they have grown themselves. This project also addresses other partnership agendas by providing diversionary activities for children, by encouraging healthier lifestyles and by bringing derelict land back into use;
- *Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP)* – co-ordinated by the Connexions partnership to provide activities for children and young people between the ages of 8-19 yrs, particularly those at risk of social exclusion and community crime;
- A joint funding initiative providing a dedicated worker to promote and encourage leisure and cultural opportunities for looked after children;
- A programme providing holiday activities for children and young people in minority communities, delivered by the community and voluntary sector.

Partners in improving life chances for Wirral's children and young people:

- Community and voluntary sector
- Connexions
- NHS Wirral
- Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service
- Merseyside Police
- Wirral Council

1.6 Wirral's living and working environment

Challenges

Our living and working environment in Wirral makes an important contribution to the quality of life of residents and to the borough's investment and tourism offer. As well as having parks and open spaces to be proud of, partners in Wirral want to ensure that all parts of the borough are places where people want to live and work.

Street cleanliness issues feature highly on surveys undertaken by the Council and cleanliness is frequently discussed at Area Forums across Wirral. It is clear that residents and businesses regard street cleanliness as extremely important to their quality of life. There is a clear link between deprivation and street cleanliness. Whilst significant progress is being made on overall cleansing standards and fly tipping removal across the borough, improvements - especially in more deprived areas of the borough - are often insufficient.

Recycling is a big issue for Wirral. Wirral was one of the worst authorities in the country in terms of performance on recycling - the percentage of household waste recycled in 2006/07 was only 9% with 5% of waste sent for composting. Wirral fell well short of its 20% combined target. To address this, a new environmental streetscene services contract for all waste and street cleaning has been put in place to deliver improvements in services.

Since the roll out of the grey recycling bins across Wirral, the recycling rates for the Borough have improved dramatically. Wirral has moved from one of the worst Council's in the Country for recycling to one of the most improved. We are currently reusing, recycling or composting over 39% of household waste which represents a massive improvement. 95% of properties are now on the grey bin scheme. Continued focus will be needed to ensure that we achieve the central government target of 40% by 2010.

Reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill has an environmental and financial benefit. If Wirral residents do not minimise waste produced and recycle more, the council will have to pay significantly more in landfill taxes in coming years. This could divert money away from other priorities.

Climate change has the potential to impact on Wirral as we have a low-lying parts of the borough which may be liable to flooding. We have a rich biodiversity of habitats and wildlife species which may be affected as well as a landscape which is a major asset to Wirral in attracting tourism and boosting the economy – 80% of our coastline has international and national designations for its importance to wildlife. Partners recognise that planning for mitigation and adaptation in the future is essential to protect our environment.

Moving in the right direction

Wirral's performance borough wide has improved in recent years, with significant progress being made on overall cleansing standards and fly tipping removal across the borough.

A wide variety of projects have already made a significant, positive impact on Wirral's living and working environment. These include:

- A partnership of the Council and leading Registered Social Landlords, has co-ordinated investment in *Tranmere Together*. This is a neighbourhood management programme which has been implemented to enable the co-ordination and delivery of services in the local area. By providing a pro-active approach to issues such as fly-tipping and anti-social behaviour, these schemes can pioneer neighbourhood change, tackle low demand and reintroduce safety and pride into communities;
- *Bidston and North Birkenhead Environmental Action Group (BEANBAG)* - an award – winning community initiative which has co-ordinated action across all public sector organisations and enlisted many private sector partners to improve the quality of the environment in a deprived area of the borough. The group does this through education, litter-picks and fun days and is so successful that it is now delivering community based environmental projects on behalf of Wirral Partnership Homes.
- *Wirral Wildlife* – the local group of the Cheshire Wildlife Trust which protects and maintains Wirral's natural habitats and species, working closely with Wirral's Ranger Service, statutory agencies and the police. The Wirral Biodiversity Forum brings together agencies with conservation and interest groups.
- A network of Friends of Parks groups – the *Friends Forum* - which meets twice a year to share best practice in enhancing and improving local urban parks and open spaces;
- The voluntary *Wirral Environmental Network* organises community events and works with schools to promote more sustainable living. A waste topic group promotes waste reduction and recycling through education campaigns;
- *UGLI (Urban Green Land Initiative)* works with owners of derelict sites and the local community to proactively find a sustainable solution for the long term maintenance of the site;
- Wirral Council, Merseytravel and Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service have all signed up to the Nottingham Declaration, making commitments to reduce their impact on global climate change. Wirral Council has also set up a Sustainability Unit to co-ordinate the borough's actions towards reducing its carbon footprint;
- The Integrated Countryside and Environment Plan (ICEP) aims to provide an umbrella project encompassing improvements to rural businesses and the environment in Merseyside. Successful Wirral initiatives include Bidston Moss, where an ICEP Mersey Forest Grant has complemented other investment to transform an area of brownfield land six times the size of Wembley Stadium into community woodland.

As well as thematic approaches to addressing some of the issues around the environment, the partnership has signed up to living within environmental limits as one of its cross-cutting principles. This is supported by the establishment of an

Environment and Sustainability Advisory Group which as well as being a voice for environmental issues will help to enhance sustainable development in Wirral.

Partners in improving Wirral's living and working environment include:

- Beechwood and Ballantyne Management Committee
- Riverside Housing
- Tranmere Together
- Wirral Council
- Wirral Partnership Homes
- Wirral Environment Partnership
- Woodchurch Neighbourhood Management

1.7 Housing in Wirral

Challenges

Whilst Wirral's efforts with regards to achieving decent homes have been largely successful in the social rented sector in recent years, it is in the borough's private sector stock where problems are greater, particularly in those homes occupied by vulnerable households. Wirral has in the region of 30,000 private sector properties which were built before 1919 and a further 35,000 private sector properties built between 1919 and 1944. Many of these have very low energy efficiency ratings and contain greater numbers of households living in fuel poverty. Improving the quality of existing housing and providing new homes to replace ageing housing stock is an important focus for Wirral Council.

In the west of the borough, house prices exceed four times the borough average and in the lower valued east, prices have risen faster than incomes. This is reflected in an increase in expressions of interest in social rented properties through the Wirralhomes choice based lettings scheme. There is, as a consequence, a greater requirement for affordable homes both for social rent and shared ownership across the borough together with financial products being made available to assist lower income households to remain in, or access, owner occupied homes.

Following the endorsement of Wirral's Strategic Housing Market Assessment, Wirral is currently developing an Affordable Housing Policy which will fully detail the level of new affordable housing required to meet the Borough's planning policies for housing provision.

Although the economic downturn has led to a fall in house prices, historical increases in all areas of the borough means first time buyers are still struggling to access owner occupation. Key indications are that volumes of house sales are falling across the Borough as are prices; and an increase in the empty properties in the more vulnerable neighbourhoods.

Against national trends, the number of homeless applicants in Wirral has not fallen at the rate it has elsewhere and the level of intentional homeless acceptances is still at a high rate compared to other areas in the North West. The use of temporary accommodation rose considerably from December 2004 to March 2008 but has been on a rapid decline since then.

There is a higher proportion of households with special needs in Wirral than the national average, including people with a physical disability and the frail elderly. These groups are more likely to live in social rented accommodation and are three times more likely to be living in unsuitable housing. These factors present a challenge in the provision of adequate numbers of suitable properties as well as supporting residents to remain in their own homes.

Our partnership health and wellbeing agenda includes developing support for older people that will help them to live safely and, independently in their own homes. The challenge for housing partners therefore, is to develop innovative and complementary services, whilst remaining within limited resources.

The demand for Supported-Living Services on Wirral continues to grow, specifically for those vulnerable people who fall within the socially excluded groups. However, access to such services remains limited, due to the difficulty in obtaining move-on accommodation and the resultant 'bed-blocking'.

The current Supported and Special Needs Housing Strategy recognises the need to re-focus strategic priorities, in the following areas:

- The development of a single access point to services for older people, to enable them to remain in their own homes through the use of Assistive Technology, Adaptations and appropriate support;
- The reinvestment of funding in support services for people with a mild to moderate learning disability who do not receive a statutory service, through joint commissioning arrangements;
- The provision of short-term services for homeless people, substance mis-users, offenders, people with mental health problems, women fleeing domestic violence and young people at risk needs to be reconfigured to reflect the varying levels of need experienced by these client groups, with a greater focus on enabling access and move-on to appropriate independent accommodation within the community.

Moving in the right direction

Wirral's proactive approach to developing sustainable, appropriate housing in line with the North West Regional Housing Strategy is evidenced in a number of strategies and programmes of activity. Notable amongst these is the work of the Housing Market Renewal Initiative to provide a greater choice of type, tenure and value of property. The application of the limited housebuilding policy in the west of the borough is intended to assist the Housing Market Renewal Initiative by concentrating redevelopment on the eastern side of Wirral. Through the short and medium term renewal of housing markets, principally in the key urban areas of inner Wirral such as Tranmere and Rock Ferry, the tone will be set for the long term revival of Wirral's eastern waterfront neighbourhoods as places where people will choose to live in the years ahead, balancing out Wirral's housing market in the process. This is reinforced by the designation of parts of Liverpool and Wirral by the Government as the *Mersey Heartlands* Growth Point, which will lead to acceleration

in housing supply in east Wirral, particularly through the Wirral Waters scheme and Housing Market Renewal developments.

We are seeking to address the significant challenges for the housing market presented by the recession in a number of ways and are working actively with Government, regional and sub-regional partners. We will continue to progress our Housing Market Renewal Initiative, increase the work of the Empty Property Strategy Team, take part in the Government's Mortgage Rescue Scheme, restructure Re-housing Services to place a greater emphasis on preventing homelessness and work with Wirral's Registered Social Landlords on worklessness and financial inclusion.

The *Living Through Change* initiative encompasses a range of initiatives to support individuals and neighbourhoods undergoing significant change. This includes environmental management and security of high stress areas through installation of security equipment, crime reduction advice, personal alarms and CCTV. Following consultation, environmental improvements have been made to the Old Chester Road Corridor in Tranmere and a Homemovers Service and a Handyperson scheme have been implemented.

Wirral Council has started to address increasing the choice of housing options for older people through the provision of two *Extra Care* schemes, with a further two currently being taken forward for development. This is giving older people choice where sheltered housing is no longer appropriate but residential or care homes are currently the only other options available.

A recent review of homelessness services has formed the basis of a new Homeless Strategy and Action Plan that focuses on preventative measures, increased partnership working and the delivery of a comprehensive housing options service. A good example of preventative working is shown by Wirral Council becoming a 'fast track' local authority in December 2008 for the Government's Mortgage Rescue Scheme.

Through the Supporting People programme, the local authority aims to improve the lives of vulnerable people in Wirral by increasing their opportunities for independence through the commissioning and delivery of quality, cost-effective and preventive, support services that meet strategic priorities. The Supporting People programme contracts with, monitors and reviews over 250 housing-related support services involving approximately 7,500 clients across the borough. Additionally, the Wirral Home Improvement Agency provides numerous services including the provision of a Handy Person Service, fast track adaptations to properties and the awarding of Disabled Facilities Grant to approximately 4,000 clients each year.

Much has already been done to deliver our aim of eradicating fuel poverty in Wirral including the delivery of the Affordable Warmth Strategy. The energy efficiency of housing is improving through initiatives offering heating and insulation improvements to vulnerable households. In addition, the Council works with the Energy Saving Trust advice centre to pro-actively target information to homes that have the greatest potential to cut their carbon dioxide emissions.

Housing partners in Wirral:

- Anti Social Behaviour Team
- 4NW
- Energy Projects Plus
- Energy Saving Trust Advice Centre
- Homes and Communities Agency
- Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service
- Merseyside Police
- Merseyside Probation Trust
- NHS Wirral
- Partnership for Racial Equality
- Private Developers
- Private Landlords
- Registered Social Landlords
- Support Providers
- Tranmere Alliance
- Tranmere Together
- Wirral Council
- Wirral Drug and Alcohol Team
- Wirral Home Improvement Agency
- Wirral Strategic Housing Partnership
- Wirral Voluntary and Community Sector Network

2. WIRRAL 2025 – VISION AND STRATEGY

2.1 Our Vision

Our vision is of a more prosperous and equal Wirral, enabling all communities and people to thrive and achieve their full potential.

Our goal to improve everyone's quality of life in Wirral is based firmly on local needs and community aspirations. The objectives in our community strategy have been, and will continue to be, informed by consultation with the people of Wirral. Consultation undertaken by the council in relation to the Local Development Framework (LDF) has also informed the partnership's vision and strategy for Wirral alongside visioning work undertaken by the Local Strategic Partnership, including within the context of identifying Wirral's Local Area Agreement priorities for improvement.

In developing our Wirral 2025 vision and Local Area Agreement, partners have sought to balance the long-term needs of the borough with the key challenges at hand. The questions for all of us concerned with sustainable solutions for Wirral include:

- What distinctive roles should each of the partners in the borough play?
- How can public agencies and the voluntary and community sector work together to maximise improvements in the quality of life for local people?
- How can the challenges found in the more deprived areas of the borough relating to issues such as health and educational attainment be addressed?
- Where in Wirral should new development be focused to deliver maximum regeneration and economic benefits?
- How new housing should be distributed between Wirral's Housing Market Renewal / Regeneration Priority Areas and higher-demand areas?
- How can we maximise the unique opportunities presented by both the borough's docklands and the Port of Liverpool?
- On which transport corridors / routes should investment in sustainable transport be focused?
- How can we ensure access to services, employment, the borough's retail offer and leisure opportunities for all our residents?
- How can Wirral's natural and built environment and local distinctiveness be respected and enhanced?
- How can we address the uncertainties of global climate change?

We are planning ahead in partnership to ensure that the borough's infrastructure and services can meet future challenges. We also recognise our success as a

partnership is closely linked with that of our neighbours in the region and beyond. We know that in order to achieve our long-term vision, Wirral must have a strong local economy and play a more significant role in the city region economy. We want Wirral to be a thriving, metropolitan area playing a significant part in the sustainable growth of the Liverpool City Region. Wirral is already in a strong position to support the city region's success. Key projects include Wirral Waters, a £4.5 billion investment creating 27,000 new jobs; major new development on the waterfront at Woodside; the £65 million New Brighton scheme and the continued development of Wirral International Business Park that has already seen in excess of £150 million of investment.

We know that a strong local economy cannot deliver prosperity for all in Wirral without addressing other issues. For example, a strong local economy requires a well-educated workforce with the right skills. Sustainable growth and investment in Wirral is therefore underpinned by our ability to provide excellent life chances for children and young people. Our communities need to be safe and offer a suitable range of appropriate affordable housing and a clean and pleasant living and working environment. Equally, improving health and well being is essential to providing a workforce fit to support the economy. A strong local economy will help us to stabilise Wirral's population and rebalance the mix of age ranges in the borough.

Partners in Wirral also recognise the links between low levels of economic inactivity and other issues such as poor health and low educational attainment. That is why we are working together to develop strong, cohesive communities where people are able to access and enjoy increased prosperity and a better quality of life. We will narrow the gap between the poorest and most affluent of Wirral's people and ensure that all communities can play their full part in a sustainable future. Our ambition is to end deprivation. We will work to narrow the gap in education, employment, health and housing both within and between communities. We will give priority to raising the aspirations, opportunities and quality of life of our most vulnerable, disadvantaged or excluded citizens, wherever they might live.

We recognise that focusing on the disparities in the borough needs to be complemented by an approach which identifies and targets a number of priority groups across Wirral, including incapacity benefit claimants, lone parents, people from black and minority ethnic communities, low income households with children, people with low or no skills, Wirral's NEET (not in education, employment or training) cohort, the over 50s and women returners.

The Local Development Framework (LDF) provides the framework within which many of the strategic objectives set out in the Community Strategy will be addressed, specifically those relating to the use of land and buildings in the borough. The Local Development Framework is a series of documents, starting with a Core Strategy. Wirral 2025 reflects the emerging Core Strategy for Wirral, which is part of the Borough's statutory Local Development Framework. The Core Strategy will be subject to several stages of public and stakeholder consultation before final adoption, which is anticipated in 2010/11. The vision for Wirral as set out in the Core Strategy is that:

- Wirral's economy will be strengthened and diversified; there will be a wide range of employment sites and premises attractive to existing businesses and inward

investors. The borough will be an attractive location for higher quality, better paying employers, particularly those in the knowledge-based sector;

- The borough will be an attractive place to live through the promotion of sustainable, mixed communities and the provision of high quality, well designed, zero-carbon, affordable, mixed tenure housing;
- Birkenhead as the borough's sub-regional centre will have been enhanced and revitalised as the retail and service centre of choice for all the borough's residents, supported by a network of vital and viable district and local shopping centres;
- The major regeneration project at Wirral Waters will have successfully transformed surplus docklands in Birkenhead and Wallasey into vibrant thriving mixed communities with a substantial range of jobs and homes;
- The borough will have developed its potential as a tourism destination focusing on the quality of its natural environment, its built heritage and coastal resorts at New Brighton, West Kirby and Hoylake;
- The high levels of deprivation and social and health inequalities found in parts of eastern Wirral will have been significantly reduced;
- All new development will be suitably adapted to the potential impacts associated with climate change and flood risk whilst minimising its own carbon emissions and consumption of water and other resources. All new residential development will have been zero carbon from 2016 onwards;
- The borough will have maintained and enhanced a high quality built and natural environment, including a fully established network of green infrastructure in the urban area and a safeguarded and enhanced biodiversity and geodiversity resource;
- The quantity of waste generated in the borough will be reduced through greater levels of waste reduction, re-use and recycling and all waste generated will be managed and processed as close as possible to the borough;
- Transport and land use will be fully co-ordinated, maximising the use of sustainable transport modes, including bus, rail, walking and cycling with the number and length of individual car journeys minimised.

2.2 Our Strategy

We will plan and take action together to deliver:

- **A strong local economy** for Wirral;
- **Safer, stronger communities** in all parts of the borough
- The best possible **health and wellbeing** for all families and individuals

- **Excellent life chances for children and young people**
- **A high quality living and working environment**
- **Sustainable, appropriate housing for all**

We will also plan and take action together to ensure that the increased prosperity resulting from a strong local economy is accessible to all, and to narrow the gap between Wirral's most affluent and most deprived communities in relation to issues such as health, educational attainment and crime.

The medium-term delivery plan for addressing the key challenges identified in the strategy is Wirral's Local Area Agreement (Part B). This highlights the priorities the Local Strategic Partnership is focusing on for the next three years, along with information about how we will ensure these activities are sustainable in the longer term.

Our objectives will also be delivered through area planning and through key partner plans such as Wirral's Investment Strategy, the Council's Corporate Plan, the Local Transport Plan, and NHS Wirral's Strategic Commissioning Plan. Wirral 2025 also complements key regional and sub-regional plans such as the City Region Employment Strategy and emerging Regional Spatial Strategy.

Collaboration in Wirral is a recognised strength and there has been considerable progress in partnership working with a strong cross section of statutory and voluntary and community sector agencies. A robust and vibrant community and voluntary sector is critical to the delivery of Wirral 2025 and Wirral's Local Area Agreement and the sector is represented at all levels of the partnership. Partnership working has been significantly strengthened through the development and agreement of our vision for Wirral 2025 and the priorities for improvement identified in our Local Area Agreement.

To deliver our objectives, we need to **think big** for Wirral. To tackle Wirral's big challenges, we are committed to large scale change. Thinking big means:

- Focusing growth and investment on the east of the borough through the delivery of Wirral's Investment Strategy, at the heart of the city region, where social, economic and environmental challenges are most acute, regeneration and improvement are most needed and where the opportunities created will be most accessible to the greatest number of people;
- Working together to ensure that the regional and local transport infrastructure supports our plans for continued growth and investment;
- Developing the Birkenhead area as the borough's principal focus for retailing and services, complemented by a network of local centres providing modern facilities for day-to-day needs and community support. However, in terms of the borough's long-term economic future, there is a continuing challenge to make Birkenhead the retail destination of choice for all Wirral residents as opposed to

just those in the immediate catchment and the need to respond to competition from nearby Liverpool and Chester, and developments such as Cheshire Oaks;

- Expanding the scale and type of employment within Birkenhead and the A41 Corridor and redeveloping the vacant and under-used land within the dock estates to provide a step change in the mix, type and quality of business accommodation available;
- Maximising the strengths of West Wirral, including its reputation for high quality homes and environment as well as being an increasingly recognised destination for countryside and coast recreation and tourism, which will in turn support growth and regeneration in the east of the borough;
- Transforming our services, and looking at ways we can as partners collaborate to maximise our strengths;
 - Ensuring that the strong and vibrant voluntary and community sector in Wirral plays an increasingly key role in improving quality of life for all;
- Looking ahead to the challenges presented by an increasingly ageing population for services and the community;
- Involving everyone – including residents, businesses and schools - in our plans to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change and reduce Wirral's carbon footprint;
- Working together to tackle issues such as alcohol abuse which, if addressed, will have added value for the community;
- Making the main priority for homes the creation of sustainable and cohesive communities at the heart of the urban area, promoting housing market renewal and providing a greater mix in the size, type, tenure, quality and affordability of housing available, supported by a high quality environment and modern services including health and education.

A number of large scale regeneration projects are already underway which demonstrate that we are thinking big:

Wirral Waters

Birkenhead and Wallasey docks are the scene of huge transformation as Peel Holdings develop the concept of Wirral Waters – a £4.5 billion regeneration project to bring jobs and new homes to the docks, with views of the Liverpool Waterfront.

The project will take many years to complete but Peel has already started with a scheme to refurbish the Hydraulic Tower on the Four Bridges route which will provide a new hotel and restaurant. The Hydraulic Tower has been a local landmark for 150 years and has not been fully used for over 50 years. Its new use shows the potential for change in an area that has been overlooked for too long.

Plans for shops, offices and new-build residential developments are the next stage in the ambitious scheme. The plans are for the North Bank area of Birkenhead

docks as the company plans to build a new community around the already renovated warehouses at the docks. This is in line with the 2008 announcement that the Mersey Heartlands are a 'growth point', allowing significant numbers of new homes to be built in parts of Birkenhead and Liverpool.

Wirral Waters will play a key role in delivering the objectives of the sustainable community strategy and achieving the sustainable growth and diversification of the economy and communities of inner Wirral, through the following emerging objectives of the Wirral Waters Strategic Regeneration framework:

- Bringing housing growth to the inner area of Wirral in partnership through the Mersey Heartlands Growth Point, complementing adjoining regeneration initiatives and catering for a range of housing needs;
- Stimulating the regeneration of the surrounding area through a planned approach to physical and social / economic integration and intervention;
- Innovating through new markets and placing Wirral on the global map, thereby positioning Wirral strongly to respond to wider economic influences in the 21st century;
- Providing a catalyst investment and working in partnership on training and skills programmes in local communities, to ensure that local people, particularly the long term workless, can access new employment opportunities;
- Bringing significant growth in the knowledge economy to the area, including major new offices for financial / professional services and the public sector, and with the potential to accommodate the office functions of a range of specialist sectors e.g. creative, research / science, environment, maritime;
- Securing a higher education facility for Wirral;
- Strengthening the economy of the area, including major new retail, leisure and cultural 'destinations' at both East Float and Bidston Dock, to complement and strengthen the existing offer in Birkenhead/Wallasey, capture spending leakage and act as a key attractor to future investors and residents;
- Expanding and strengthening the small and medium sized enterprise base of inner Wirral, through supply chain effects and positive knock on effects on local enterprise and innovation;
- Securing the future of the maritime sector in the area, including the relocation of port tenants from East Float to vacant and under-used land elsewhere in the port;
- Providing strategic and local connectivity to Wirral Waters, by rail, bus, ferry, walking / cycling and private vehicle, through a new 'city structure', including the delivery of a new 'city boulevard' and other key linkages, whilst opening up dockside access for all;

- Bringing investment in sustainable technologies and infrastructure, including energy, waste and water, promoting exemplar sustainability and stimulating the environmental sector in the wider area.

Newheartlands

The Merseyside Housing Market Renewal Initiative Pathfinder – Newheartlands, is a long term regeneration project, to tackle the causes and symptoms of housing market failure, vacancy and decline at the heart of the conurbation.

Since 2003, a £43 million programme has been delivered, involving targeted acquisition and clearance and large scale refurbishment. Current activity in Rock Ferry and Tranmere will be completed over the 2008-11 period culminating with the leveraging of £38 million private sector investment in new homes on the Fiveways estate and the £30 million redevelopment of Church Road. A key focus will also be to align the housing market renewal in Birkenhead with the long term intentions of the Wirral Waters scheme and ensure that HMR makes a full contribution to the local economy.

Woodside Waterfront Development

This major regeneration programme will include the redevelopment of the Woodside Waterfront in Birkenhead, opening up exciting opportunities along the riverside site which overlooks the historic Liverpool waterfront. It is envisaged that this will create an area comprising offices, restaurants and bars, pavement cafes and other leisure ventures on the waterfront. The programme will include over £250 million of private sector investment and the creation of over 1,000 new jobs.

Wirral Coastal Zone

One of Wirral's key assets is its countryside and coast. A strategic programme of investment has been developed to capitalise on this which is made up of a number of key projects along the Wirral coastline:

- Building on the success of the Open Championship in 2006 through the creation of a world class golf resort in Hoylake;
- A £60 million regeneration scheme is currently underway in New Brighton to re-invigorate this seaside resort and restore it to its former glory, with the redeveloped Floral Pavilion now a flagship for the borough;
- A Masterplan for West Kirby and Hoylake, with proposals to improve economic prospects for existing businesses and encouraging private sector investment.

Wirral's Local Strategic Partnership is committed to maximising Wirral's potential as a place where people want to live, work and invest. The partnership is further committed to ensuring the approaches developed for addressing Wirral's challenges take into account the needs of all sectors of the broader community, promote fairness, accessibility and inclusion, and result in lasting improvements.

3. PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLES

Wirral's regeneration plans are undoubtedly ambitious. The challenge for partners in the borough is to balance the need to safeguard and enhance the quality of its environment, while at the same time meeting the needs of increasing community expectations, modern living and providing a modern and sustainable location in which to do business.

Sustainable communities are places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all.

We are committed to ensuring the approaches developed for addressing Wirral's challenges take into account the needs of all sectors of the broader community, promote fairness, value for money, accessibility and inclusion, and result in lasting, sustainable improvements.

As a partnership, we have therefore adopted the following cross-cutting principles to support our collaborative efforts to achieve sustainable solutions in Wirral:

- **Living within environmental limits**, for example in recognising the importance of climate change;
- **Working towards a strong, cohesive and fair Wirral**, where all communities and individuals feel valued;
- **Engaging communities**, in shaping services and identifying and being part of local solutions;
- **Ensuring that our services are accessible**, working together to develop collaborative approaches to delivering services and working with transport partners and others to promote connectivity;
- **Delivering value for money**, both in our partnership solutions and in the services we provide as individual organisations.

3.1 Living within environmental limits

Wirral's Strategic Partnership is committed to maximising Wirral's potential as a place where people want to live, work and invest and Wirral 2025 reflects this by including a delivery theme about Wirral's living and working environment. We know, however, that the challenges presented by climate change and other environmental issues mean that we must take a broader view to ensure that we can engage and act appropriately at all levels of the borough. As a partnership, we are committed to the promotion of more sustainable development, waste minimisation, recycling, renewable energy, energy and water conservation and eco-homes.

Wirral Council and other partners have signed up to the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change and the local authority hosts a cross-agency working group to deliver actions across Wirral to reduce the impacts of climate change. The

improvement target in Wirral's Local Area Agreement to reduce CO₂ emissions will also help to ensure that sustainability is high on our shared agenda.

A key concern for the partnership is balancing our economic strategy with environmental and social considerations. We understand that this is not an easy task. We understand the risks of over development to localities and want to avoid the loss of local character and distinctiveness which is so important to Wirral residents, for example through converting and re-using existing buildings. We also know that increased economic prosperity may result in increased levels of car ownership, which is still low in parts of the borough. Whilst the majority of Wirral's residential areas are within 400 metres of a bus stop or railway station, there is still a high dependency on the car for journeys to work. Traffic levels already have an impact on communities along the busiest routes, particularly along routes to and from the motorway and Birkenhead. The implications for congestion and long-term air quality are potentially negative, so partners need to work together to put in place measures to ensure that the impact is as low as possible, for example through encouraging greener transport options.

A Environment and Sustainability Advisory Group (ESAG) has been set up to further review the themes and priorities in Wirral 2025 and our Local Area Agreement to ensure that we are tackling the potential social, economic and environmental impacts of our actions. The group has already undertaken a sustainability impact assessment of the improvement targets identified in Wirral's Local Area Agreement.

Key issues identified through this work include:

- As the borough increases its levels of recycling, more facilities may be needed to deal with material – what are the potential negative impacts of this, and how can we deal with them in partnership;;
- How to fully integrate climate change as a strategic issue for all partners;
- How to ensure that air quality in the borough is not compromised by increased traffic resulting from the higher levels of economic prosperity which we are aiming to achieve in Wirral.

The Environment and Sustainability Advisory Group will maintain strong links with other forums addressing the sustainability agenda, including the Climate Change Strategy Group.

3.2 Building a strong, cohesive and fair society

Community cohesion is a local and national priority. Since the disturbances of 2001 and the acts of a small group of extremists in London in July 2005 there has been increased focus upon addressing this area. The development of community cohesion is the attempt to build communities with four key characteristics:

- A common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities;
- The valuing of diversity;
- Similar life opportunities for all; and
- Strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds and circumstances in the workplace, in the school and within neighbourhoods.

Building a cohesive Wirral around these characteristics means recognising diverse needs and taking action to tackle inequality. We want the diversity of people’s different backgrounds and circumstances to be appreciated and positively valued, and for positive relationships to be developed between people from different backgrounds. Wirral’s Strategic Partnership will take an advisory role regarding the emerging community cohesion agenda (including National Indicator 35).

All public bodies have a legal duty to respond to race, disability and gender issues with regard to the services they provide and the employment of staff. In order to work through the legal duty, organisations have to engage fully with the following key areas of work: policy development and review, consultation, training, responding to emerging legislation, and engagement with the third sector. A common framework for engaging with the agenda is to use the six strands model:

- Age
- Disability
- Faith / Religion
- Gender
- Race
- Sexual Orientation

Wirral’s Strategic Partnership has adopted this framework for the purposes of developing an approach to ensuring that all public bodies we have a consistent and uniform pattern of working across the borough. A Wirral Equalities Forum (WEF) has been established which will ensure that we and our partners are promoting the same core values in relation to the six strands of equality across all of the services we deliver and in our roles as employers. There is a great deal of work now underway by partners and community groups, creating a firm foundation for future partnership work. We are now in a position to take advantage of the current level of activity and move the equality and diversity agenda to another level. The Wirral Equalities Forum provides a delivery mechanism to ensure that we continue to work together and play a supporting role for the third sector and will, for example, work with Wirral’s Black Racial Minority Partnership (WBRMP) on a wide range of issues such as monitoring and reviewing race equality schemes and establishing recruitment and selection best practice in partner organisations.

3.3 Engaging communities

A clear directive for local areas has been set out in the Communities in Control White Paper to recognise and support representative and participatory democracy. It is about providing ways to pass power to local communities and citizens, giving them real control over local decisions. Community involvement is a crucial factor in ensuring the success of Wirral 2025 and our Local Area Agreement.

We want to ensure that the views of Wirral’s residents are sought and used to shape the delivery of services. Well-established mechanisms such as the borough’s area forums provide residents with opportunities to influence local services and partnership plans. Recent successes include:

- The Hospital Trust joining the Area Forums as panel members to enhance partnership working through the forums with effect from October 2007;

- NHS Wirral contributing £55k per annum through the Area Forums to fund projects and initiatives designed to improve the health and wellbeing of Wirral residents.
- Annual conferences to celebrate the success of our Area Forums, and discuss how to better to engage with our communities.

In addition to the Area Forums, Wirral also has an established Youth Forum and Youth Parliament to enable young people to have their say in shaping services. In 2007, an Older People's Parliament was established which gives older people an opportunity to have their say on council decisions that affect their lives.

Wirral traditionally has had a strong ethos of voluntary and community work which has been carried out through a range of agencies. One of the strategic aims for Wirral's Strategic Partnership is to further explore joint community engagement activities with the third sector through the development of a Comprehensive Engagement Strategy. Wirral's Strategic Partnership will take an advisory role regarding to National Indicator 7 (environment for a thriving third sector).

The role of Wirral's Compact and its codes are seen as an important element in this process. The Compact and its codes form the basis of the partnership with the voluntary and community sector, setting out the rules for engagement between local public sector bodies. These codes, written and agreed at a local level, will provide the baseline from which all community engagement activities will be measured.

3.4 Ensuring that our services are accessible

Transport and access to employment opportunities and services both within and outside the borough are critical to tackling inequality.

Wirral, along with the other Merseyside authorities of Knowsley, Sefton, St Helens, Liverpool and Halton, works in partnership on transport and accessibility issues across the sub-region. The Merseyside Local Transport Plan (LTP) Partnership has recently been awarded Beacon status for *Improving Accessibility*, largely for its work on identifying areas of deprivation or particular need and the development of projects to address this need.

Over the next 10 years, Merseytravel will be completing an ambitious programme of improvement and development works to provide a single, integrated public transport network accessible to all, as well as helping to tackle climate change by reducing car dependent lifestyles. Working with partners and stakeholders, Merseytravel is committed to promoting walking, cycling and public transport use to improve quality of life in the Liverpool European city region and beyond.

LTP 3 is due to be launched in 2011 with vital strategic direction for the future of Wirral and the region's transport and accessibility issues. This document will be informed by the objectives in Wirral 2025, and in turn will inform future reviews of the strategy.

3.5 Delivering value for money

Working smarter and making the best use of our resources is especially critical in the current climate. Public services face huge challenges if they are to deliver the improvements that users expect. As we move further into the 21st century, there is an ever widening gap between the way we have traditionally provided services and what the public expect.

We are committed to delivering value for money as a partnership, both through the joint commissioning of services, and individually through the actions that we take to work better and smarter within our individual organisations.

4. DELIVERING WIRRAL 2025

Wirral 2025 is a long term vision demonstrating how the statutory agencies, the private sector and the community and voluntary and community sector work collectively to improve the quality of life within Wirral. It sets the scene for partnership working in the borough for the years to come and will play a key role in meeting the borough's future challenges, by linking together key local authority and partner strategies and driving short and medium term prioritisation through Wirral's Local Area Agreement and area planning.

Our delivery themes for Wirral 2025 are:

- **A strong local economy** for Wirral;
- **Safer, stronger communities** in all parts of the borough
- The best possible **health and wellbeing** for all families and individuals
- Excellent **life chances for children and young people**
- A high quality **living and working environment**
- **Sustainable, appropriate housing** for all

Three key drivers will make improved outcomes in relation to these themes a reality. These are:

- **Wirral's Local Area Agreement**
- **Key plans and strategies** within each thematic area (these are identified in 3.1 onwards)
- **Area planning** to identify how the aims of Wirral 2025 can be progressed locally

A Local Area Agreement (LAA) is an annually refreshed contract between central government and local partners setting out 3 year improvement targets. This contract is essentially the medium-term delivery plan for our Sustainable Community Strategy and should therefore be viewed alongside this strategy (see Part C). Priorities are included in Wirral's Local Area Agreement on the basis of the following principles:

- Is it a problem for Wirral or a part of Wirral?
- Is it in need of improvement?
- Does it need partnership working to achieve it?
- Does the evidence base exist to prove the above?

A comprehensive governance structure (see diagram p.37) is now in place for partnership working in Wirral. It has been designed to aid effective delivery of Wirral 2025 and our Local Area Agreement and ensure that there is accountability at all levels.

Wirral's **Strategic Partnership Assembly** has wide representation from all sectors and has a consultative function to ensure that there are a full set of views on how Wirral's Strategic Partnership can take forward the priorities for Wirral, as well as being a forum for sharing best practice. The Partnership Assembly also has an important role of co-ordinating engagement across the sectors.

The Wirral **Strategic Partnership Executive** (previously the LAA Programme Board) is the senior decision making board for Wirral's strategic partnership with overall responsibility for the delivery of Wirral 2025 and our Local Area Agreement. The Executive's role is to work collaboratively to ensure the delivery of the objectives and targets contained in Wirral 2025 and the Local Area Agreement and to remove any barriers or blockages to successful delivery. The Executive will also be responsible for maximising Wirral's performance within the new Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) framework. Representation on Wirral's Strategic Partnership Executive is drawn from Wirral Council, NHS Wirral, Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, JobCentrePlus, Learning and Skills Council, the private sector, Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, Merseyside Police, the community and voluntary sector and Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service

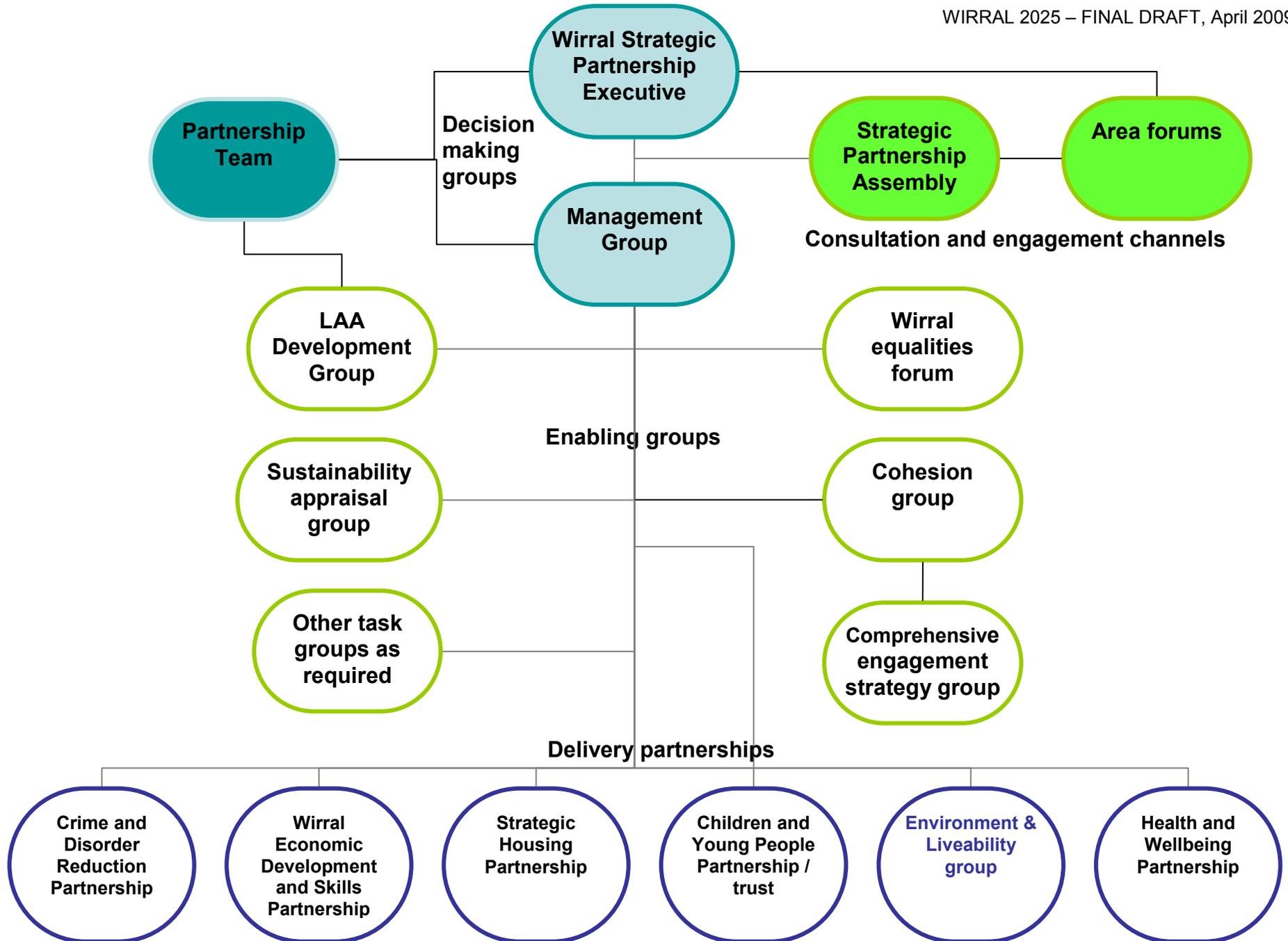
Six thematic partnerships – one for each of Wirral 2025's six delivery areas - lead on our Local Area Agreement improvement priorities and related targets by managing the performance and risks through robust delivery plans.

These thematic partnerships are:

- **Crime and Disorder Reduction:** led by the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership
- **Children and Young People** (to become Children's Trust): led by the Children and Young People's Executive Board
- **Health, Care and Wellbeing:** led by the Health and Wellbeing Partnership
- **Strategic Housing:** led by the Strategic Housing Partnership Board
- **Environment and Liveability:** currently led by the liveability group
- **Economic Development and Skills:** led by the Wirral Economic Development and Skills Partnership group.

The **Partnership Management Group** is responsible for overall management of delivery plans, for responding to the ongoing assessment of local needs and priorities and providing leadership and direction to the **enabling groups** supporting the partnership. These enabling groups, such as the Wirral Equalities Forum and the Environmental and Sustainability Advisory Group, advise the partnership to ensure that issues such as equality and diversity, sustainability and community cohesion are integrated into every level of planning and delivery. These groups will be critical in identifying ways that the partnership can demonstrate its shared principle through real action.

Wirral's Area Forums are also an important part of our delivery and governance arrangements, ensuring that views and actions at local level are fed into strategic priorities and plans. Each Area Forum has its own area plan which identifies how strategic priorities are being translated into local action. It is through the delivery of the Wirral's Local Area Agreement and the review of our local area plans that we will further develop our understanding of people and places in Wirral.



4.1 A strong local economy

A **strong local economy** is fundamental to our vision for a more prosperous Wirral. We want Wirral to be a thriving, prosperous, metropolitan area contributing to growth at the heart of the Liverpool City Region. We want to expand the number and type of jobs, to increase opportunities for income growth and wealth creation for local people and reduce the numbers of people commuting outside of the borough for work. The economic downturn makes these aspirations far more challenging to achieve, however we remain committed to focusing growth and investment on the east of the borough, where social, economic and environmental problems such as long-term worklessness are most acute, and where the opportunities created will be most accessible to the greatest number of people. We also want to retain the spending of Wirral residents within the borough to ensure that increased prosperity has a positive impact on the borough's living and working environment – our high quality cultural offer will be integral to this, including the authority's tourism and coastal strategies. We are also committed to playing a full part in the emerging multi area agreement around the economy.

Wirral's Local Area Agreement improvement targets will also help to deliver the local authority's enterprise and full employment plans. These plans focus on a number of areas and groups, such as lone parents, over 50s, people from minority ethnic communities and areas with rates of worklessness over 25%.

Measures of success in Wirral's Local Area Agreement 2008-11:

- **National Indicator 151** - overall employment rate
- **National Indicator 153** - working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods
- **National Indicator 171** - new business registration rate
- **Local indicator** - total amount of land developed for employment use
- **Local indicator** - NVQ level2 skills participation

Key plans and strategies:

- Regional Spatial Strategy
- Regional Economic Strategy
- Wirral Council's Corporate Plan
- Wirral's Enterprise Strategy
- Wirral's Full Employment Strategy
- Wirral's Investment Strategy
- Wirral's Local Development Framework
- Wirral's Tourism Strategy

4.2 Safer, stronger communities

Wirral has made significant progress in creating **safer communities**, with crime and the fear of crime continuing to fall across the borough. Wirral has the lowest rate of recorded crime in Merseyside and levels of burglary, violent crime, robberies and vehicle crime are amongst the lowest in the country. We want to keep improving because we know that crime is still a high priority for local people. We also want to make sure that people and businesses in the more deprived areas of Wirral do not continue to experience disproportionately high levels of crime and disorder. Tackling anti-social behaviour is a high priority for partners, and we will continue to work together to address related issues such as alcohol and improved services for the borough's young people. Another area of focus will be reducing the number of first time entrants into the youth justice system by continuing to reduce overall levels of crime.

Measures of success in Wirral's Local Area Agreement 2008-11:

- **National Indicator 15** - serious violent crime rate
- **National Indicator 20** - assault with injury crime rate
- **National Indicator 38** - drug-related (Class A) offending rate
- **National Indicator 47** - people killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents
- **National Indicator 111** - first time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10-17
- **Local Indicator** – reducing the number of incidents of ASB
- **National Indicator 21** – people who agree that the police and local councils are dealing with anti-social behaviour and crime that matter in their area (perception measure)

Key plans and strategies:

- Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy
- Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy
- Wirral Council's Corporate Plan

4.3 Health and wellbeing

Wirral has a rich history of partnership working to deliver improvements in the borough's **health and well-being**. We want to continue to build on this foundation to tackle the serious issues of continuing health inequalities and an ageing population. In Wirral, those in our most affluent areas live on average over 10 years longer than those in the most deprived areas. We want to focus on activities which address those things which have an impact on life expectancy, including alcohol-related disorders, smoking and cardio vascular disease. We also want to offer improved support for people to make better lifestyle choices. We will work hard to address the challenges of developing services in line with Wirral's ageing population and the expectations of people who rightly want to remain independent for as long as possible and to have choice in how they access services. This will have significant implications for the way social care is delivered in the borough.

Measures of success in Wirral's Local Area Agreement 2008-11:

- **National Indicator 39** - alcohol harm related hospital admission rates;
- **National Indicator 120** - all-age all cause mortality rate;
- **National Indicator 123** - stopping smoking;
- **National Indicator 130** - Social Care clients receiving Self Directed Support (Direct payments and Individual Budgets)
- **National Indicator 135** - Carers receiving needs assessment or review and a specific carer's service, or advice and information
- **Local indicator** - clients aged 16-35 with two or more episodes of self-harm in the last 12 months who subsequently become engaged in meaningful social activities
- **Local indicator** - people supported to live independently through social services (all adults)
- **Local indicator** - to reduce the number of people with dementia admitted to residential and nursing care 5% reduction on 2007/8 admittances
- **Local indicator** - the number of emergency unscheduled acute hospital bed days occupied by people aged 75 or more in NHS hospitals in Wirral who are admitted through fractured neck of femur as a result of a fall

Key plans and strategies:

- Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy
- NHS Wirral Strategic Commissioning Strategy
- Teenage Pregnancy Strategy
- Wirral Council's Corporate Plan
- Wirral Hospital NHS Trust Integrated Business Plan 2007-12

4.4 Life chances for children and young people

Life chances for children and young people in Wirral are overall very good. Most of our children and young people will fulfil the aspirations that they, we and their parents and carers have for them. They will be healthy, safe and well educated, have easy access to recreation, sport and leisure, be able to make a positive contribution to society and be well prepared for their working lives. However, while Wirral on the whole is a positive place for children and young people to grow up, some children and young people do not fulfil their potential. The high levels of poverty and deprivation in some parts of the borough undoubtedly have an impact upon children's lives and their development. Partners in Wirral want to reduce outcome gaps between children from poorer backgrounds and the population as a whole to that ensure that all of our young people have the best possible start in life.

Measures of success in Wirral's Local Area Agreement 2008-11:

- **National Indicator 48** - children killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents
- **National Indicator 55** - obesity among primary school age children in Reception Year
- **National Indicator 68** - referrals to children's social care going on to initial assessment
- **National Indicator 112** - under 18 conception rate
- **National Indicator 117** -16-18yr olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)
- + set statutory indicators for attainment and early years
- **Local Indicator** - safely reducing the number of looked after children
- **Local Indicator** - young people's participation in activities

Key plans and strategies:

- Children and Young People's Strategic Plan
- Wirral Council's Corporate Plan

4.5 Living and working environment

Wirral's **living and working environment** is hugely important to increasing investment and prosperity, as well as having a real impact on local people's quality of life. Wirral has a culture and heritage to be proud of and it is important to our sense of identity that we retain and promote these aspects of life that impact on our living environment. We have made improvements to our environment but we are committed to doing more. Waste and recycling, street cleanliness, highway maintenance, the quality of our parks and open spaces and safety on our roads are all issues that rightly matter to local people and we recognise that all partners in Wirral can contribute to making improvements in these areas. We want a cleaner, greener Wirral for all, and we will therefore work to tackle the disparities in cleanliness standards affecting some of our more deprived areas. Another key area of focus will be on reducing the CO2 emissions per capita across the borough, and partnership working around the CRed system will be a valuable tool in achieving this target.

Measures of success in Wirral's Local Area Agreement 2008-11:

- **National Indicator 167** - congestion- average journey time per mile during the morning peak
- **National Indicator 186** - per capita reduction in CO2 emissions in the local authority area
- **National Indicator 192** - household waste recycled and composted
- **National Indicator 195** - improved street and environmental cleanliness
- **Local Indicator** – improved street and environmental cleanliness – levels of litter and detritus in Wirral's most deprived areas

Key plans and strategies:

- Climate Change Strategy
- Joint Merseyside Waste Strategy
- Local Transport Plan (LTP3)
- Wirral Council's Corporate Plan

4.6 Sustainable, appropriate housing

Delivering **sustainable, appropriate housing** is a challenge for all stakeholders in Wirral. We want the main priority for homes to be the creation of sustainable communities at the heart of the urban area, promoting housing market renewal and providing a greater mix in the size, type, tenure, quality and affordability of housing available, supported by a high quality environment and modern services including health and education. We also want everyone to live in a decent home. Decent housing is essential so that everyone experiences social cohesion, health, well-being and independence. Vulnerable households, which are defined as having family members on means tested or disability related benefit, are statistically more likely to live in a non-decent home compared to other households.

Measures of success in Wirral's Local Area Agreement 2008-11:

- **National Indicator 154** - net additional homes provided
- **National Indicator 155** - number of affordable homes delivered (gross)
- **National Indicator 156** - number of households living in temporary accommodation
- **Local Indicator** - number of vulnerable households assisted with at least one main energy efficiency measure under Warm Front

Key plans and strategies:

- Empty Property Strategy
- Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy
- Regional Housing Strategy
- Wirral Affordable Warmth Strategy
- Wirral Council's Corporate Plan

Wirral council is committed to making information accessible to everyone. You can visit your local one stop shop or telephone our call centre on (0151) 606 2020 for support and advice if you need information translated or in another format such as large print, Braille or audio.

<p>مجلس ویرال Wirral ملتزم بامكانية توفير المعلومات ليتمكن الحصول عليها بواسطة كل فرد. يمكنك الذهاب الى وحدة الخدمات المتعددة او اتصل تلفونياً على مركزنا للاتصالات على الرقم (0151) 606 2020 للمساعدة والنصح إذا ترغب في المعلومات مترجمة او في شكل آخر كالكتابة بخطوط كبيرة، بكتابة بريل او شريط كاسيت.</p> <p>(Arabic)</p>
<p>উইরাল কাউন্সিল সকলের কাছে তথ্য পৌছে দেওয়ার জন্য দায়বদ্ধ। আপনি আমাদের ওয়ান-স্টপ-শপে ভিজিট করতে পারেন বা আমাদের কল সেন্টারে (0151) 606 2020 –এই নম্বরে সাহায্য ও পরামর্শের জন্য ফোন করতে পারেন যদি আপনি তথ্য অনুবাদিত, অন্য ফরম্যাটে, বড়ো হরফে ছাপায় বা ব্রেইল লিপিতে পেতে চান।</p> <p>(Bengali)</p>
<p>偉盧鎮議會致力為所有人士提供資訊。如果您需要某些資料翻譯成其他語文或編制成其他模式的版本（如大字體、凸字或錄音帶），您可以到就近的「一站店」或致電「傳訊中心」（0151606 2020）查詢。</p> <p>(Chinese)</p>
<p>Tá Comhairle Wirral tiomanta le heolas a chur ar fail do gach duine. Is féidir leat cuairt a thabhairt ar an ionad ilfhreastail is áitiúla duit nó glaoch a chur ar an lárionad glaonna s'againn ar (0151) 606 2020 chun tacaíocht agus comhairle a fháil má tá eolas de dhíth ort aistrithe nó i bhfoirm éigin eile, mar shampla, cló mór, Braille nó closmheáin.</p> <p>(Gaelic)</p>
<p>विरल कौंसिल, सभी लोगों के लिए जानकारी को पहुंचयोग बनाने के लिए वचनबंध है। यदि आपको किसी जानकारी के हिन्दी में अनुवाद की या किसी और रूप में जैसे कि बड़े अक्षरों में छपाई, बरेल में या कैस्ट के रूप में अवाश्यकता हो तो सलाह और मदद प्राप्त करने के लिए आप अपनी स्थानीय वॉन स्टाप शाप में जा सकते हैं या इस नम्बर पर (०१५१) ६०६ २०२० पर हमारे किसी भी एक काल सेंटर में टैलीफोन कर सकते हैं।</p> <p>(Hindi)</p>
<p>Rada Miejska Wirral stara się, aby informacje były dostępne dla wszystkich. Mogą Państwo odwiedzić miejscowy ośrodek informacyjny (one stop shop) lub zadzwonić do naszego biura obsługi klienta pod numer telefonu (0151) 606 2020 po wsparcie i porady, jeśli informacje wymagane są w innym języku lub formacie, np dużym drukiem, w wersji audio lub w alfabecie Braille'a.</p> <p>(Polish)</p>
<p>ਵਿਰਲ ਕੌਂਸਲ ਸਾਰਿਆਂ ਲਈ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਪਹੁੰਚਯੋਗ ਬਣਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਵਚਨਬੱਧ ਹੈ। ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਤਰਜਮੇ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕਿ ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਛਪਾਈ, ਬਰੇਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਾਂ ਕੈਸਿਟ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਸਲਾਹ ਅਤੇ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਲੈਣ ਲਈ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਆਪਣੀ ਸਥਾਨਿਕ ਵੌਨ ਸਟਾਪ ਸ਼ੌਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੇ ਹੋ ਜਾਂ ਇਸ ਨੰਬਰ (0151) 606 2020 ਤੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਕਾਲ ਸੈਂਟਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ ਹੋ।</p> <p>(Punjabi)</p>
<p>Gollaha Wirral waxa uu isku xil-saarey in uu wargelinta ka yeelo wax uu qof walba heli karo. Waxa aad booqan kartaa Dukaanka Hal-Mar-Joogsiga ah ee xaafadaada ama sooba wac xarruuntayada soo wicitaanka oo laga helo (0151) 606 2020 si aad tageero iyo la tallin uga hesho haddii aad u baahan tahay in wargelinta luqad kale loogu turjumo ama looga soo dhigo qaab kale sida far waaweyn, farta ee Braille ama cajallad maqal ah.</p> <p>(Somali)</p>
<p>ویرال کونسل معلومات کو ہر ایک کیلئے قابل رسائی بنانے کیلئے پابند عہد ہے۔ اگر آپ کو معلومات ترجمہ شدہ یا کسی دیگر شکل جیسے بڑے حروف، بریل یا آڈیو کی شکل میں مطلوب ہو تو آپ مدد اور مشورے کیلئے اپنے مقامی ون اسٹاپ شاپ پر آسکتے ہیں یا ہمارے کال سنٹر کو (0151) 606 2020 پر فون کریں۔</p> <p>(Urdu)</p>